REMARKS

Claims 1-2, 5-6 and 8-9 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 5 and 6 have been amended. No new matter has been added. Claims 3-4 and 7 have been canceled.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-2, 5-6 and 8-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Sibigtroth U.S. Patent No. 5,251,304 in view of Phillips U.S. Patent No. 6,505,279. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection with respect to the claims, as amended.

Claims 1, 5, and 6 have been amended to recite, *inter alia*, that in a first mode of the microcomputer, the central processing unit fetches instructions from an external memory. In a second mode, the central processing unit fetches instructions from internal memory and inhibits fetching instructions from the external memory. The internal memory has a reprogrammable nonvolatile memory storing user data, in which a lock code is written in a specified area. When a predetermined value is set into the specified area as the lock code, the microcomputer is configured to be set into the second mode. Support for these amendments may be found, for example, on pages 7-14 of the specification.

Thus, a secure processor changes modes in accordance with storing a predetermined value into the specified area in nonvolatile memory. For example, the first mode, i.e., when the first value is stored into the specified area, means that the central processing unit can fetch instructions from the memory external to the secure processor. The second mode, i.e., when the second value is stored into the

specified area, means that the central processing unit fetches instructions from the internal memory of the secure processor.

This same combination of elements is neither disclosed nor suggested by Sibigtroth and Phillips, viewed alone or in combination.

For example, Sibigtroth discloses a secure processor having on-chip memory. The secure processor accomplishes the secure mode by selectively isolating internal data/instruction bus transfer activity from an external data/instruction bus. The secure processor has an isolation buffer for isolating between the internal data/instruction bus and the external data/instruction bus.

However, Sibigtroth does not teach or suggest that the central processing unit fetches instructions from either the internal memory or the external memory in accordance with the lock code stored in the internal memory, as required by Applicant's claims.

Similarly, Phillips discloses a microcontroller system having a security circuit to selectively lock portions of a program memory address space. The security circuit controls access to the contents of a program memory or inhibits access in accordance with a "security byte." Phillips' microcontroller system can access the internal memory area and the external memory area (shown in Fig. 3A and 3B), or can access the external memory area only (shown in Fig. 3C).

However, the microcontroller system disclosed in Phillips is different from the claimed invention. In Phillips, the microcontroller can execute a program fetched from the external memory anytime, and if the program fetched from the external memory is for changing the "security byte," the microcontroller can change modes, thus allowing access to the internal memory area. That, too, is not the claimed

invention. For example, with reference to claim 1, it does not correspond to the claimed second mode, wherein the central processing unit fetches instructions from the internal memory and "inhibits fetching instructions from the external memory." Similar distinctions are recited in claims 5 and 6. Consequently, Applicant respectfully submits that Sibigtroth and Phillips do not disclose or suggest all of the claimed features.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that all pending claims are patentably distinct from the cited references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

BUCHANAN INGERSOLL & ROONEY PC

Date: December 26, 2007 By: 

Brian N. Fletcher
Registration No. 51683

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, VA 22313-1404
703 836 6620